# **Teacher Resource**

**National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior**

**Fossil Butte National Monument Kemmerer, Wyoming**



# **Teacher's Guide and Answer Key for Leafy Thermometers and Rain Gauges**

### **Leaf Margin and Area Analysis**

The use of leaves from woody dicotyledonous trees and shrubs as climate indicators dates to the work of Sinnott and Bailey in 1915. Over the years it has been refined and tested by many other researchers in locations worldwide. With few exceptions, the basic assumption that correlation of mean annual temperature with leaf than rather than are influenced primarily by climate. A recent scientific paper by Little, Kembel

**Contact Information**—e-mail: fobu\_interpretation@nps.gov, phone: 307 877-4455, or mailing address: Fossil Butte National Monument, PO Box 592, Kemmerer, WY 83101.The activity and supporting materials are available at <www.nps.gov/fobu> under the quick-link tab *For Teachers*. All materials may be reproduced for educational use. Comments and suggestions are encouraged, and should be forwarded to the education specialist using contact information provided above.

#### Answer Keys for Leaf Sets























**Table 1** *(Climate Analysis Worksheet)*

#### **Part B. Leaf Margin Analysis and Mean Annual Temperature**

1. Use the data from **Table 1** to determine the proportion of untoothed morphotypes  $(P_{U})$  in the fossil leaf

data set. Use the equation  $P_{U} = \frac{1}{C_{U}}$  found to calculate the proportion. Show your work to 4 decimal places.  $\mathop{\rm Column}\nolimits_{\rm D_{\rm TOTAL}}$  $P_U = \frac{\text{Column } D_{\text{total}}}{\text{Column } C_{\text{total}}}$ 

$$
P_u = 20
$$
 untouched / 39 morphology  
= 0.5128 or 0.5128

2. Calculate mean annual temperature (MAT) to 2 decimal places using the equation MAT ( $^{\circ}$ C) = (28.99 x P<sub>u</sub>) +  **1.32**. Show your work to 2 decimal places.

**MAT (°C) = (28.99 x 0.5128) + 1.32 = 14.87 + 1.32 = 16.19°C OR MAT (°C) = (28.99 x 0.5385) + 1.32 = 15.61 + 1.32 = 16.93°C**

3. The diagonal line on graph below represents the relationship between the proportion of untoothed leaves ( $P_{U}$ ) and mean annual temperature (MAT). It has a **negative slope** / **positive slope** (circle one) meaning the more untoothed leaves a place has the **cooler** / **warmer** (circle one) the average temperature is. Use the graph below to determine mean annual temperature (MAT) in °C and °F.

Step 1. Find the proportion of untoothed leaves  $(P_{U})$  on the horizontal x-axis of the graph.

- Step 2. Draw a vertical line using a ruler from  $P_{U}$  on the x-axis until it intersects the diagonal line.
- Step 3. From the point of intersection with the diagonal line, draw a horizontal line using a ruler that intersects both vertical y-axes of the graph.



 4. Read the mean annual temperature in °C from intersection of the horizontal line with the y-axis to the left. Record your answer below. Does the graphical solution agree with the algebraic solution in question 2? If they do not agree within 0.5°C you need to check both solutions.

$$
-- 16.2°C, acceptable answers 15.7 to 16.7°C
$$
  
OR  
- -16.9°C, acceptable answers 16.4 to 17.4°C

5. Read the mean annual temperature in °F from intersection of the horizontal line with the y-axis to the right. Record your answer below.

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 61.1°F, acceptable answers 60.6 to 61.6°F
 OR
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 **62.3°F, acceptable answers 62.0 to 63.0°F** 

#### **Part C. Leaf Area Analysis and Mean Annual Precipitation**

1. Use the data from **Table 1** to determine the proportion of large-leaved morphotypes  $(P_1)$  in the fossil leaf

data set. Use the equation  $P_{\text{r}} = \frac{1}{\text{Coulomb}} \frac{1}{\text{Coulomb}} \frac{1}{\text{Coulomb}} \frac{1}{\text{Coulomb}}$  to calculate  $P_{\text{r}}$ . Show  $P_L = \frac{(Column E_{TOTAL} + Column F_{TOTAL} + Column G_{TOTAL})}{Column C}$ **Column C<sub>TOTAL</sub>** 

your work to 4 decimal places.

- **PL = (9+1+0) large-leaved morphotypes / 39 morphotypes = 10 large-leaved morphotypes / 39 morphotypes = 0.2564**
- 2. Calculate mean annual precipitation (MAP) using the equation MAP  $(cm) = (377 \times P_1) + 47$ . Show your work to 2 decimal places.

$$
MAP (cm) = (377 \times 0.2564) + 47
$$
  
= 96.66 + 47  
= 143.66 cm

- 3. The diagonal line on the graph below represents the relationship between the proportion of large-leaved morphotypes  $(P_1)$  and mean annual precipitation (MAP). It has a **negative slope** / $\phi$ **ositive slope** (circle one) meaning the more large leaves a place has the **less precipitation** / **more precipitation** (circle one) it receives annually. Use the graph to estimate mean annual precipitation  $(MAP)$  in centimeters and inches.
	- Step 1. Locate the proportion of large-leaved morphotypes  $(P_1)$  on the horizontal x-axis of the graph.
	- Step 2. Draw a vertical line using a ruler from  $P<sub>1</sub>$  on the x-axis until it intersects the diagonal line.
	- Step 3. From the point of intersection with the diagonal line, draw a horizontal line using a ruler that intersects both vertical y-axes of the graph.



 4. Read the mean annual precipitation in centimeters (cm) from intersection of the horizontal line with the y-axis to the left. Record your answer below. Does the graphical solution agree with the algebraic solution in question 2? If they do not agree within 5 centimeters you need to check both solutions.

#### **144 cm, acceptable answers 138.7 to 148.7 cm**

 5. Read the mean annual precipitation in inches (in) from intersection of the horizontal line with the y-axis to the right. Record your answer below.

**56.5 in, acceptable answers 54.7 to 58.7 in** 

#### **Part D. Modern Climatology Data**

1. Convert the mean annual temperature (MAT) in °C from Part B question 2 to °F using the formula:

 ${}^{\circ}F = \frac{(9 \times {}^{\circ}C)}{5} + 32$ . Show your work. Record answer in **Table 2**. Round your answer to 1 decimal place.

**MAT (°F) = ((9 x 16.19) / 5) + 32 = (145.71 / 5) + 32 = 29.14 + 32 = 61.1°F MAT (°F) = ((9 x 16.93) / 5) + 32 = (152.37 / 5) + 32 = 30.47 + 32 = 62.5°F OR**

2. Convert the mean annual precipitation (MAP) in centimeters from Part C question 2 to inches using

the formula:  $\text{in} = \frac{\text{cm}}{2.54}$ . Show your work. Record answer in **Table 2**. Round your answer to 1 decimal **\_\_\_\_\_**

place.

**MAP (in) = 143.67 / 2.54 = 56.7 in**

- 3. Go to the Wyoming Climate Summaries web site at <www.wrcc.dri.edu/summary/climsmwy.html> and click on the links in the left margin for Fossil Butte, Kemmerer and Sage one station at a time. Record the *Annual Average Max. Temperature* (equivalent to  $T_{MAX}$  in **Table 2**), the *Annual Average Min. Temperature* (equivalent to T<sub>MIN</sub> in Table 2) and *Annual Average Total Precipitation* (equivalent to MAP in Table 2) for each station.
- 4. To estimate mean annual temperature (MAT) for Fossil Butte, Kemmerer and Sage average  $T_{\text{max}}$  and

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T_{MIN}. Use the equation: MAT = \frac{(T_{MAX} + T_{MIN})}{2}. Show your work. Record answers in Table 2.
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Fossil Butte:
MAT (°F) = (54.6 + 23.6) / 2
           = 78.2 / 2
           = 39.1°F 
Kemmerer:
MAT (°F) = (53.9 + 23.7) / 2
           = 77.6 / 2
           = 38.8°F 
Sage:
MAT (°F) = (55.5 + 21.0) / 2
           = 76.5 / 2
           = 38.25°F
```


Table 2

 6. What general statement can be made about climate change over the last 52 million years in southwestern Wyoming based on the results in **Table 2**?

**Southwestern Wyoming's climate has become much cooler and drier over the last 52 million years.** 

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## **Climate Change Worksheet**

 1. **Graphs 1** and **2** show how temperature has changed over geologic time. Read the captions, compare the graphs and list three differences. [Bonus: List one similarity.]

**1) Graph 1 uses the actual temperature and Graph 2 uses temperature variation. 2) Graph 1 measures time in millions of years and Graph 2 measures it in thousands of years. 3) Graph 1 has only 2 data points, while Graph 2 has many (actually 3311). 4) Graph 1 is a straight line, while Graph 2 is a jagged line with many peaks and valleys. 5) Graph 1 is from a location in the northern hemisphere and Graph 2 is located in the southern hemisphere.**

**Bonus: 1) The maximum temperature change in both graphs are nearly the same, 22.6°F in Graph 1 and 22.7°F in Graph 2 (This pure coincidence). 2) Both graphs indicate temperatures have been cooling over the respective time frames, pronounced in Graph 1 and minimal in Graph 2. 3) Both graphs represent a single point on the Earth's surface.**



**Graph 1**—The graph shows the temperature change over the last 52 million years in southwestern Wyoming based on the analysis of fossil leaves (P. Kester and A. Aase, pers. com., 2011) and modern observational data. The mean annual temperature 52 million years ago was 61.1°F and today it is 38.5°F, a difference of 22.6°F.



**Graph 2**—The graph (based on Petit, J.R. et al, 1999) shows the variation in temperature over the last 425,000 years at Vostok, Antarctica as determined from ice cores. The five tallest peaks represent short-lived warm periods that interrupted major glaciations. During the height of a warm period about 125,000 years ago, temperatures were 5.8°F warmer than today. At the last glacial extreme about 25,000 years ago they were 16.9°F cooler, a difference of 22.7°F.

2. **Graphs 3** and **4** show how temperature has changed as advanced human civilization developed. Read the captions, compare the graphs and list three differences.

**1) Graph 3 uses the actual temperature and Graph 4 uses temperature anomalies which are variations from a long-term average. 2) Graph 3 covers a longer period in years than Graph 4. 3) Graph 3 has more data points than Graph 4 (352 vs 130). 4) Graph 3 represents what is happening at a single location, while graph 4 is an average from a network of global locations. 5) The maximum temperature change in Graph 3 is much greater than in Graph 4 (7.17°F vs 1.86°F).**



**Graph 3**—The graph (based on Parker, D.E. et al, 1992) shows mean annual temperature for Central England from 1659 to 2010. It is the longest continuous temperature record in existence. The lowest mean annual temperature over this period was 44.31°F in 1740 and the highest was 51.48°F in 2006, a difference of 7.17°F.



**Graph 4—**The graph (based on data from the National Climate Data Center) shows the annual global temperature anomaly for 1880-2009. A temperature anomaly is the difference between an observed temperature and a long-term average temperature. The largest negative anomaly over this period was -0.75°F in 1911 and the largest positive anomaly was 1.11°F in 2005, a difference of 1.86°F.

- 3. Why does **Graph 1** look so different from the other three? [Hint: Give a pointed answer.] **Graph 1 is a straight line, while Graphs 2-4 are jagged lines with many peaks and valleys. This is because Graph 1 was drawn using just 2 data points and Graphs 2-4 used many data points.**
- 4. Why is a global average, as opposed to data from a single location, a more meaningful measure of climate change?

**A global average has data from a network of stations across the earth's surface. This reduces the effects of unusual weather at one or more individual locations resulting in a more reliable measure of climate change.**

5. The methods used to produce the graphs are different, but what do they all show? [Hint: Look to axes] **They all reveal how temperature has varied over time.**

- 6. The dashed line in the last three graphs are linear trendlines. Trendlines smooth the peaks and valleys using an averaging technique to reveal the direction and magnitude of change over a period of time.
	- Step 1. Calculate the change in temperature,  $\Delta T(^{\circ}F)$ , for Vostok, Antarctica, Central England and Global using data in the table below and the equation:  $\Delta T({}^{\circ}F) = t_{min} - t_{max}$ . Show your work.



Record your anwers here.



Step 2. Calculate the rate of temperature change per century,  $\Delta T/t$  ( $\rm{^{\circ}F}$  per century), for Vostok, Anarctica, Central England and Global using data from Step 1, the table below, and the following equation. Show your work and round answer to 5 decimal places.





**Example (SW Wyoming):** from Step 1,  $\Delta T$  (°F) =  $-22.6$ °F **from table,**  $\Delta t$  (yrs) = 52,000,000 yrs

 $\Delta T/t$  (°F/100 yrs) =  $\frac{-22.6^{\circ}F}{2.000}$  x 100  **= -0.00005°F/100yrs 52,000,000 yrs**  $-22.6^{\circ}$ F

> **Vostok, Antarctica: ΔT/t(°F per century) = (-0.595 / 425,0000) x 100 = -0.00014°F per century Global: ΔT/t(°F per century) = (1.3148 / 180) x 100 = 1.01215°F per century Central England: ΔT/t(°F per century) = (1.615 / 352) x 100 = 0.45881°F per century**

Record your answers here.



- 7. Compare the rates of temperature change per century. The short-term records (Central England and Global) (cooling, or warming) significantly, while the long term records (SW Wyoming and Vostok, Antarctica) suggest it has \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**cooled**, or **warmed**) albeit very slowly. **suggest Earth's surface temperature is warming cooling**
- 8. In your opinion, why does, or doesn't the evidence presented support a conclusion that modern climate change is being influenced by humans (anthropogenic climate change)?

9. Use the internet to investigate three factors (one anthropogenic and two natural) that influence Earth's climate. On separate index cards list each factor, what its influence is and how that varies over time. Be prepared to discuss the relative contribution of each factor to modern climate change in class.